

Blue River Technology



SUNNYVALE

CA

IMPACT

\$305M
ACQUISITION REVENUE

BLUE RIVER TECHNOLOGY, INC.

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For many small businesses embarking on the National Science Foundation SBIR program, the story of Blue River Technology is the one they want to emulate. Step 1 – Develop brilliant idea. Step 2 – Get acquired by one of the biggest names in the agricultural industry for hundreds of millions of dollars.

But the simplicity of that scenario doesn't paint an accurate picture of all the hard work and grassroots efforts of the Blue River Technology team. Before John Deere showed interest in the company, the Sunnyvale, CA small business was already a leader in bringing advanced technologies into agriculture, starting with the lettuce business. By utilizing a Phase I and Phase II grant from NSF, Blue River was able to hire its first employees and gain the credibility needed with investors in the scientific community.

With its "Every Plant Counts" philosophy, Blue River develops cameras that utilize computer vision and artificial intelligence to identify every single plant on the ground. With this technology, farmers can better identify needs and optimize resources, while giving each plant exactly what it needs to thrive.

The company's See & Spray technology allows the user to spray herbicides only where needed, giving farmers a new way to control and prevent herbicide-resistant weeds while also eliminating 90% of the herbicides sprayed today. Blue River estimates this can result in a reduction of 2.5 billion pounds in global herbicide use.

Blue River Technology is a wholly owned subsidiary of Deere & Company and is committed to putting computer vision and artificial intelligence into the hands of farmers in order to maximize plant growth.

There are over 250 species of resistant weeds; trying to fight those sometimes results in dead crops. Blue River's solution allows farmers to spray exactly where it is needed, without hurting the plants.

Blue River's See & Spray technology is currently being introduced in the cotton weeding industry in the United States.

Total NSF Investment:
\$650,000

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